

SCAP 2018 NATIONAL SOLIDARITY MONTH

Theme:

Mary in our Midst:

“I am the Servant of the Lord. Be it done to me according to your Word.” [Lk 1:38]

Here comes the month of November again! The Student Catholic Action of the Philippines is very glad to celebrate the annual National Solidarity Month. It is in this period that all members, partners, and collaborators are invited to be conscious of being a promoter, advocate, builder, sharer, and giver of PEACE. Much, in this year's celebration of NSM challenged us all to be brave and be fully aware of our being agent of social transformation by building PEACE as a way of life.

This year, SCAP continues to partner with like-minded organizations to widen the scope of this advocacy. We commit to breaking the borders of exclusivity as we welcome and work with friends from ecumenical and interreligious domains. One of our concrete expressions with this endeavor is the *“Maryam in our Midst”* Muslim-Christian Dialogue and Peace Program. It highlights the beautiful story of Mary or Maryam in Islam as the chosen, “pure,” and “blessed” among women mentioned in the Holy Bible (Luke 1:42) and Quran (Sura 3, Al Imran, ayah 42). The program is a meaningful partnership of interfaith, a testament that we all respect each other's faith traditions yet at the same time using these faith morals as a bridge for peace. We offer our profound gratitude to our service-partners: the De La Salle University Lasallian Pastoral Office, Angel C. Palanca Peace Program Foundation Inc., and the Philippine Center for Islam and Democracy. Indeed, our shared devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, manifests our yearning for sentiments of friendship, and solidarity.

Now that the new liturgical year is about to begin, the Year of the Youth, which will be another year-long celebration will be declared in the Philippine Church this month too. SCAP, as a pioneering Catholic Youth Organization in the country and a recognized movement of the CBCP Episcopal Commission on Youth through the Federation of National Youth Organizations, receives a stronger zeal more than ever to center our advocacies on Environment and Peace. These points were also agreed upon during the 13th Asian Session and Council in Taiwan where SCAP seats as a full-time member of the of the International Young Catholic Students (IYCS) last July 29 to August 06, 2018.

Our theme is derived from our interfaith program and the 2018 World Youth Day theme. In recognizing Mary as our dear Blessed Mother, we also see her youth. We are blessed to know that the Church does not neglect to listen to our young. The recently concluded Synod on Youth last October clearly noted a call for Catholic young people to “network” and to collaborate, “not only on the civil and social level but also in the ecumenical and interreligious” and even pursuing to shared goals which include .”-human rights, environmental protection, opposition to any kind of violence and abuse against children, respect for religious freedom.”

Remembering Mary offering her firm *“Yes!”* to the Lord in her youth, we too in the Student Catholic Action, commit the same response in the Church ministry and service. The World Youth Day and National Youth Day next year will highlight Mary's bravery and will give importance on social relationships and communities, that “even in this hyperconnected world, the youth can be trusted as partners in shaping our country and our church.” Indeed, SCA says too that we are the Lord's servants, “Let it be done to me, according to your Word.”

HOW CAN WE CELEBRATE NSM 2018?

1. **CARDINAL JOSEPH CARDIJN'S DAY**

Every November 13, SCAs never miss to commemorate the person who inspired our movement in teaching us our way of life – SEE, JUDGE, and ACT. You can gather members as a unit, chapter or diocese to celebrate this occasion. Use our NSM 2018 theme and connect the SJA to create a fruitful yet straightforward one-day program. The celebration of the Holy Eucharist is highly recommended.

2. **CHRIST THE KING FEAST DAY**

For our Flag, for our Faith, for Christ the King! – We exclaim these words in the last part of our SCA Hymn. Indeed, the feast of all feasts is Christ the King! We encourage you to participate in your respective parishes. Make sure to check the schedule in your local community. It is appreciated that SCA will take part as an organization to help in the preparations and actual activities. Ideally, in the 4 Stages of SCA Formation towards Full-fledge Membership, it is in this month that units will be conducting the last primary formation – the Christ the King Recollection and Commissioning of new members. If your unit is able to do so, you may connect with your parish priest to hold the commissioning after a holy mass in your parish facing the congregation.

3. **TAIZE RECOLLECTION & COMMUNITY PRAYER**

The Taize Prayer is close to the heart of SCA. It is a community prayer that reminds and teaches us about the spirit of Trust and Reconciliation. Your unit, chapter or diocese can offer at least one day this month to conduct this activity.

4. **ADVOCACY PROGRAMS and ACTIVITIES**

SCAP ties up with other organizations with the same mission in keeping the integrity of all creations and having a practice of personal and communal peace. Your unit, chapter or diocese may contact the national secretariat to connect you to our advocacy partners, the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM)-Pilipinas and Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP)-Philippines. Please make sure to send your request at least 2 weeks before the actual schedule.

5. **1 PESO SOLIDARITY PROJECT**

SCAP annually collects a voluntary contribution of **Php 1.00** per member every NSM. The funds will be used for our annual membership to the International Young Catholic Students in both Asian and International offices. Furthermore, these funds will also go to our advocacy projects for environment and peace. We encourage units to endorse the collection to the national secretariat within the year. Kindly deposit to *Bank Name* – **Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI)**, *Account Name*: Student Catholic Action of the Philippines National Secretariat, Inc., *Account Number*: 0973-1774-94 (Savin

References:

World Youth Day 2019 Panama Official Site. <http://worldyouthday.com/panama-2019>. Accessed 7 Nov 2018.

Instrumentum Laboris for the Synod 2018. Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment.

<http://www.synod2018.va/content/synod2018/en/fede-discernimento-vocazione/instrumentum-laboris-for-the-synod-2018--young-people--the-faith.html>. Accessed 5 Nov 2018.

An Open Letter to the Youth: Year of the Youth. Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines – Episcopal Commission on Youth. 2018.